

Dave Orrick, *Pioneer Press*

The funding gap to restore St. Paul's Union Depot to its former glory shrunk by nearly half this week with the announcement of a \$40 million federal transportation grant.

Ramsey County is undertaking an effort - with a maximum taxpayer price tag of \$243 million - to resurrect the Lowertown landmark by 2012 into a transportation hub featuring Amtrak trains, Greyhound and Jefferson buses, and local mass transit, including the Central Corridor light-rail line.

Local, state and federal government funding had left the county \$100 million short, although county officials have pledged they will be able to finance the remaining portion without raising local property taxes.

This week, elected leaders, including U.S. Reps. James Oberstar and Betty McCollum, are trumpeting an announcement by federal transportation officials that the project has been awarded a \$40 million grant from the U.S. Department of Transportation.

That leaves about \$60 million unaccounted for.

Work on the project already has begun.